

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 662

By McNally

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of First Lieutenant David R. Bernstein, United States Army.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to recognize the valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, one such courageous American, 1st Lieutenant David R. Bernstein of the U.S. Army, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 508th Infantry Battalion, 173rd Infantry Brigade, based at Camp Ederle, Italy, lost his life on October 18, 2003, in pursuit of freedom and democracy for the people of Iraq; and

WHEREAS, he parachuted into Iraq on March 27, 2003, one week after the ground phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom began. He was fatally wounded when his patrol was ambushed and attacked with rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire in Taza, Iraq; and

WHEREAS, this gallant soldier grew up in Austin, Texas before moving to Phoenixville, Pennsylvania prior to his junior year of high school; he graduated as Valedictorian of Phoenixville High School in 1997 and accepted an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point; and

WHEREAS, at West Point, he excelled in both athletics and academics, competing on the Academy swim team and graduating fifth in his class with a degree in civil engineering; and

WHEREAS, as no award previously existed to recognize the tremendous accomplishment of graduating fifth among a class filled with the future leaders of the United States, First Lieutenant Bernstein's family have now established the 1LT David R. Bernstein Memorial Award to be given to those who achieve the fifth highest class standing in each graduating class of the United States Military Academy; and

WHEREAS, it is a fitting tribute to a man who always lived up to the Academy's motto, "Duty, Honor, Country"; and

WHEREAS, 1st Lt. Bernstein possessed the mental and physical capabilities to succeed in any area of life, yet he made the admirable decision to devote his considerable talents to the promoting the welfare of the United States and our world; "What he wanted to do was to do something for his country," recalled his proud father, Richard Bernstein; and

WHEREAS, this fallen hero will be dearly missed by his surviving family members and friends, including his father, his mother, Gail, a brother, and a sister; and

WHEREAS, this intrepid warrior of freedom leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in military life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional soldier and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of First Lieutenant David R. Bernstein, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his limitless courage, and his stalwart commitment to the defense of his nation as a member of the United States Army.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of 1st Lt. Bernstein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.